

SPECIAL INVESTIGATION

NEWS IN BRIEF

Ballyea players on the catwalk

A NUMBER of Ballyea hurlers will swap their playing gear for the latest in men's fashion at Treacy's West County Hotel in Ennis on this Friday night.

Apart from members of the team preparing for the All-Ireland club final on St Patrick's Day, there will be plenty of ladies modelling on the catwalk for the players' fund.

A capacity crowd is expected for the event to give backing to the biggest occasion in Ballyea GAA Club's history, when the Clare and Munster champions line out in Croke Park.

The show, which will begin at 7.45pm, will feature a wide range of fashion from local boutiques and menswear shops. Collections for Holy Communion and Confirmation will also be shown.

As a special incentive for ladies to embrace the atmosphere, A Stylish Lady Award is on offer. Doors will open at 7.15pm.

Cottage market opportunity

COMMUNITY groups are being encouraged to avail of start-up funding in order to set up and run their own cottage market.

The initiative, announced by GIY (Grow it Yourself) invites groups to apply for supports to the value of €65,000. The aim is to put homemade craft and home-grown food at the centre of local communities.

Applications can be made at <http://thecottagemarket.ie/set-up-a-cottage-market/> to avail of funding to establish and run a cottage market. The initiative will see 20 new markets established across the country and those behind the new markets will take part in a training programme to ensure their success and longevity.

The deadline for applications is March 3 and the groups behind the 20 new markets will be selected by March 10, with the training programme taking place on March 25.

According to GIY, a cottage market differs from the farmers' market concept in that it is about bringing hobbyists and amateur producers together to showcase their often hidden skills and talents in areas such as growing, sewing or baking.

The late Danny Moran

THE death has occurred this week of Ennis businessman Danny Moran, late of Woodstock, Shanaway Road.

Well-known to many in the town through his plumbing business, Mr Moran was also well regarded for his charitable work. He was also a former captain and president of Ennis Golf Club and Woodstock Golf Club.

He passed away on Monday, peacefully, at University Hospital Limerick.

The funeral mass will take place at Ennis Cathedral this Thursday morning at 11am, with burial afterwards in Drumcliffe Cemetery.

He is survived by his wife, Marie; daughters, Ruth and Janet; son, Joe; daughter-in-law, Jean; grandchildren, Cian, Shona, Bernard and Siún; brothers-in-law, sisters-in-law, nephews, nieces, relatives and friends.

Additional protection in new Bill

FINE Gael Spokesperson on Justice in the Seanad, Senator Martin Conway, has welcomed the passage of the Criminal Law (Sexual Offences) Bill 2015 through Seanad Éireann.

He said the Bill "is an essential piece of legislation that brings additional protections to some of the most vulnerable people in our society. The provisions of this Bill enhance and update laws to combat the sexual exploitation and sexual abuse of children".

Senator Conway said it will end the cross-examination of victims of sexual offences by an accused and will criminalise the purchaser of sexual services, rather than the seller.

"As a member of the last Joint Oireachtas Committee on Justice, I was particularly pleased to see this legislation progress. I believe that this legislation is very progressive and will go some way to protect the most vulnerable in our society," he said.



■ Senator Martin Conway.

In week four of the Mary Raftery Journalism Fund-supported investigation, **Dan Danaher** examines the environmental compliance of Clean Ireland Refuse and Recycling Limited; Lufthansa Technik Shannon Limited, Shannon and Shannonside Building Supplies

Clean Ireland's waste capacity trebled

CLEAN Ireland's transfer facility in Cree has become one of the largest refuse and recycling operators in the Mid-West, following approval for a tripling of its processing capacity.

The company employs up to 100 people, spread over a variety of areas, from drivers, operatives, management, environmental and administrative roles.

Clean Ireland operates a company-wide Integrated Management System (IMS), which has ensured a high level of standards and regulatory compliance across all areas, including its EPA obligations, according to director Brian Lyons. In January 2016, Clean Ireland was

successful in achieving ISO certification in ISO 9001 Quality, OHSAS 18001 Health and Safety and ISO 14001 Environment.

Four years ago, Clean Ireland Refuse and Recycling Limited operated under a waste permit issued by Clare County Council and was authorised to accept and process 21,000 tonnes of waste annually, including 5,000 tonnes for disposal to landfill. This primarily consisted of household, commercial, construction and demolition waste.

Operating from its West Clare headquarters since 1984, Clean Ireland is now permitted to accept and process 64,600 tonnes annually,

after the EPA granted a new waste licence in November 2013, subject to stringent conditions.

This includes 29,500 tonnes of household and commercial waste; 13,500 tonnes of biodegradable waste; 1,500 tonnes of industrial non-hazardous sludge; 17,500 tonnes of construction and demolition waste; 2,250 tonnes of end-of-life vehicles and 350 tonnes of other hazardous waste.

Last year, Clean Ireland accepted and processed about 53,000 tonnes of waste.

Material that can be accepted at the Cree facility include segregated biodegradable waste, otherwise

known as brown bin waste; municipal solid waste (MSW), segregated dry recyclables, mixed commercial and industrial waste (CM), construction and demolition waste (C&D) and hazardous waste, including end-of-life vehicles.

The facility occupies an area of about three hectares and the proposed development will increase the site by 0.4 hectares.

Clean Ireland also holds a waste facility permit for a facility at Smithstown Industrial Estate, Shannon, which is used for the bulking up of waste prior to transfer to Cree.

With the exception of emergencies, or as may be agreed by the

EPA, this facility may only be operated between the hours of 7am and 10pm, from Monday to Saturday inclusive and between the hours of 8am and 6pm on Sundays.

"Clean Ireland is required to carry out regular environmental monitoring and submit all monitoring results and a wide range of reports on the operation and management of the facility to the EPA," the licence states.

Mr Lyons commented, "Clean Ireland has a strong commitment to innovation and improvement. It offers zero landfill solutions to many of its international blue chip clients and is subject to regular stringent environmental compliance audits

by these companies.

"Clean Ireland has achieved a good level of compliance with the requirements of the licence and has had regular contact with our EPA inspector with regards to changes and improvements at the facility."

The company has won the National Repak Recycling Awards for several years running and says it is considered best in class when it comes to waste management services to both the domestic and commercial/industrial markets.

It promotes recycling and waste to energy and also actively assists the hospitality industry and local schools to achieve their green status.

HSE issues noise warning

THE HSE warned the EPA that excessive noise from the Cree-based waste transfer facility was not acceptable.

This warning came after information from the noise monitoring programme under the local authority permit for Clean Ireland Refuse and Recycling Limited had shown that noise from activities undertaken at the site during early morning were higher than the stipulated limit of 45dBa.

These activities took place at the closest noise sensitive location, approximately 126m, from the centre of processing activities.

Activities identified as giving rise to the breach of the limit during this period included the starting-up of waste collection trucks and equipment on site, such as the ballistic separator, according to an EPA inspector's report on Clean Ireland's waste licence application, dated September 12, 2013.

Clean Ireland has confirmed the activity it was carrying out in this area was moved into an adjacent sealed building in early 2015.

A number of noise monitoring reports completed by Anua [wastewater services and maintenance consultants], such as one on March 24, 2014, suggested

that "activities within the Clean Ireland facility, although audible, were not causing nuisance noise to the receiving noise sensitive locations".

The average sound pressure levels recorded at the noise sensitive location located north-east of the site on April 12, 2016 were 56dBa, which was above the waste licence limit.

The main source of on-site noise was due to the movement of machinery about the site, occasional machinery-reversing tones, road traffic entering/existing the site and idle vehicles at the front gate, it was determined.

In an earlier submission to the EPA, the HSE stated, "A health nuisance shall not be caused by noise generated from this development due to the operation of machinery, vehicular traffic or other disturbances".

Clean Ireland stressed that it remains committed to ensuring that noise from the facility does not become a nuisance to people living and working in the area with the help of its noise management programme.

"Noise monitoring is carried out by an independent and fully qualified consultancy firm and these results are reported to the EPA in a timely manner," said director Brian Lyons.



Dust problem settled at plant

BIRDS are not a welcome sight flying over or perched on any part of the Clean Ireland waste transfer facility in Cree. The feathered creatures' droppings had exacerbated problems in respect of dust levels on site but the company has taken action to address this.

In a statement issued to *The Clare Champion*, Clean Ireland outlined the majority of all waste is now handled and stored indoors, thus minimising dust emissions.

In its submission to the EPA in 2013, the HSE stressed that the waste transfer station had to comply with the 1987 Air Pollution Act.

"A public nuisance must not be caused by this development or associated vehicular traffic, due to emission of dust, smoke, dirt, grit, fumes or other pollutants," the HSE stated.

Two years later, depositional dust monitoring at the facility revealed breaches at three locations, according to documents obtained by *The Clare Champion*. Material included bird faeces, small black dust particles, small fly, leaf decomposition and water.

Bord na Móna environmental scientist Kate Tynan carried out depositional dust monitoring on behalf of the company. It is required to carry out such monitoring at selected locations within the facility four times a year, in accordance with its waste licence.

Four Bergerhoff dust gauges were continuously exposed for a 28-day period between November 18 and December 16, 2015. The samples were returned to the Bord na Mona INAB accredited

laboratory for analysis. Samples exceeded the waste licence limit of 350mg/m²/day at three of the five monitoring locations.

Ms Tynan carried out another dust monitoring review at the site from February 24, 2016 to March 23, 2016. This revealed the dust licence limit was not exceeded at any of the five monitoring locations.

Two other reports, which were undertaken in June and July 2016, found the dust depositional concentrations were compliant with the waste licence limit.

Brian Lyons, recycling director, said, "Clean Ireland did have issues with the dust monitoring receptacles being contaminated with bird faeces but by agreement with the EPA, the adapting of the dust jars with bird spikes has resolved the issue. One exceedance has been noted since but this has been attributed to falling leaves."

"Clean Ireland will, with the agreement of the EPA, place nets over the dust collecting jars to prevent large objects, such as leaves and twigs, entering the jars and skewing the results. This is in place at other facilities."

Mr Lyons said in dry weather, site roads and any other areas used by vehicles are sprayed with water, and when required, to minimise airborne dust nuisance under the EPA licence.

The road network in the vicinity of the facility has to be kept free from any debris caused by vehicles entering or leaving the facility. Any such debris or deposited materials has to be removed without delay.

Measures improve surface water quality

CLEAN Ireland has outlined a series of measures that have been taken to improve the quality of surface water on site.

These include moving truck and bin washing operations to its Shannon facility, so that run-off goes to public sewer where it is treated; keeping waste indoors to prevent the ingress of rainwater; transferring less organic waste through the Cree facility and storing all organic waste in covered, sealed containers.

The company recently employed environmental consultants and engineers to recommend any improvements that can be made to the drainage system, which will be carried out if the EPA agrees with the recommendations of a new report.

Surface water monitoring

is carried out weekly by staff and quarterly by an independent consultancy firm. The company takes any exceedances of trigger levels very seriously. Where trigger levels have been exceeded, a senior manager has taken the necessary actions by investigating and reporting to the EPA and other notifiable bodies.

The company pointed out that trigger levels are different from emission limit values (ELVs), where any exceed is regarded as a non-compliance. Trigger levels are a guideline level, which alert the licensee to undertake an investigation and/or corrective and preventative action.

Many waste facilities have no trigger limits or are required to set their own limits with regard to EPA guidelines.

€950,000 set aside for closure plan

A SHANNON-based aircraft maintenance company has set aside a financial provision of €954,584 to cover any environmental liabilities that may arise in the event that a closure plan has to be implemented. Lufthansa Technik Shannon Limited's 2015 Annual Environmental Report (AER) states that figure is its financial provision cover, as determined by the latest Environmental Risk Assessment (ELRA).

The ELRA is conducted on a three-yearly basis, as per licence requirement, by external consultants and reflects a risk assessment of environmental impacts only. As per EPA requirements, a financial bond is in place to the value of €197,000.

Lufthansa Technik Shannon (LTS), formerly Shannon Aerospace Ltd (SAL), which started operations in October 1992, specialises in the overhaul of short and medium-range aircraft.

With 32,000m² of facilities at Shannon Airport, the maintenance, repair and overhaul (MRO) company provides services to more than 50 airlines and employs a workforce of more than 500.

The aircraft overhauls are carried out in a 12,300m² hangar. In a further 4,600m² hangar, up to two aircraft can be painted at a time. Its facilities also include numerous workshops and a training centre.

The *Clare Champion* examined a number of environmental documents held by the EPA in relation to the company. It found that following a site inspection visit on March 26, 2014, EPA inspector Martin O'Reilly issued five observations in relation to waste stor-

age and labelling, air monitoring accreditation, emissions to sewer monitoring and accident prevention procedure paperwork.

During the site tour, an IBC container of waste material was observed to be stored in an un-bunded area. It was noted that other than this IBC, waste materials were stored in appropriate areas.

The EPA requested the company to ensure that all waste materials are stored in appropriate designated areas and are protected from storm water run-off and leachate generation. The agency also stressed that the company must ensure that all waste is appropriately labelled to identify its contents.

It requested confirmation of the accreditation status of air monitoring test methods with its contractor.

Reports for monitoring of emissions to sewer were reviewed during the site inspection. It was noted from the reports that Carbonaceous Biochemical Oxygen Demand (CBOD) was being reported. This method is widely used as an indication of the pollutant removal from wastewater.

However, the EPA pointed out the licence parameter is for BOD and requested documentary evidence of corrective action.

LTS stated that all actions arising out of this visit were issued to the EPA within the agreed timeframe and accepted accordingly.

Following another site inspection visit on February 29, 2016, the agency recommended the provision of edge protection on the roof in the vicinity of three emission points. The company confirmed that edge protection

was erected and verified and noted that this was classified as an observation.

According to a document obtained by *The Clare Champion*, it took the company nine days to notice an exceedance for chemical oxygen demand (COD). This test indicated a COD level of 2,116 mg/l, versus emission limit of 1,500mg/l.

The chemical oxygen demand (COD) test is commonly used to indirectly measure the amount of organic compounds in water.

The incident report sent to the EPA stated that June 3, 2015 was the approximate start and it was first noticed on June 12, 2015.

The company stated that standard practice was observed, samples were issued for analysis, while a formal response issued to and accepted by EPA.

Asked about its overall compliance level with the EPA, LTS outlined it has retained licence compliance since 2005, is satisfied that it aligns with the requirements of its licence and has a "positive relationship with the EPA".

Lufthansa Technik submitted an approval document from Irish Water granting permission to cease the monitoring of temperature on emission to sewer on May 27, 2014. This was subsequently approved by the EPA on July 1, 2014.

The company also lodged a technical amendment application to allow it to perform the dismantling of aircraft alongside its pre-existing approval to perform other aspects of aircraft maintenance. However, the EPA confirmed that this request was rejected by the agency on January 25, 2016.

Costly environmental works for Shannonside

A CLARE building supplies company estimates it will spend at least €50,000 on environmental works to comply with its industrial emissions licence.

Shannonside Building Supplies Limited director Enda O'Flaherty has revealed that last year the company spent €20,000 putting in place groundwater monitoring wells at its Kilrush site.

Mr O'Flaherty expects more groundwater drilling will be required this year, which will cost at least €10,000 plus VAT, while further expenditure will be required for bi-annual surface water monitoring, training and upgrading of the diesel tank.

A few years ago, the introduction of a new safety measure on the diesel tank to ensure everything works on safety sensor cost €15,000. In addition, the company pays a €5,000 annual licence fee to the EPA.

Stating the completion of extensive environmental site works is very expensive, Mr O'Flaherty acknowledged they are necessary in order to comply with and retain the company's EPA Integrated Pollution and Prevention Control (IPPC) licence.

"Shannonside are trying to keep its doors open and keep people employed," he said.

It employed an independent company to drill groundwater monitoring wells and has agreed to do another three this year.

This will establish if there is any potential soil contamination from chemicals and if there is any movement of this. The first test produced a positive result ahead of further testing of the bund area and other selected areas.

The company carries out groundwater testing twice a year, while the EPA also completes its own monitoring up to four times a year.

Mr O'Flaherty confirmed that groundwater is being continuously monitored on the site and said that soil site investigations, which were undertaken last year, produced favourable results.

In total, Shannonside employs 82 people in its Ennis and Kilrush stores, which is an increase of 12 since 2012.

Five years ago, the company spent €250,000 completing an extension of its Ennis hardware retail outlet.

In Kilrush, the company operates a timber treatment plant, where it pressure-treats timber for different types of construction. This involves the use of certain chemicals in the treatment process.

The timber treatment sump in Kilrush, which is a pollution prevention bund, has to be tested every three years.

The EPA completed a site inspection on July 11, 2013 and made six observations in relation to surface water discharge points, surface water monitoring, timber treatment sump, diesel storage tanks, groundwater contamination assessment and housekeeping.

Mr O'Flaherty confirmed that all these issues were addressed by the company.

The EPA requested an updated ground and groundwater contamination assessment proposal to be sent to the agency by August 30, 2013.

The EPA revisited this issue again two years later, when it stated, "It can be reasonably concluded that the groundwater beneath the site has been contaminated and will require investigation and possible remediation".

In the 2013 Annual Environmental Report (AER), the company outlined its plans to reduce emissions to surface and groundwater and for visual inspection of the treatment plant bund area.

This report stated the surface-water reading exceeds the Dangerous Substance Regulations for a chemical, propiconazole, and pledged the Environmental Management Programme for 2014 would continue to focus on post-treatment recovery wood preservative drippings and protection of surface waters.

Concern about the level of this chemical was also raised in the 2012 AER, which noted the Environmental Management Programme for 2013 would also continue to focus on post-treatment recovery wood preservative drippings and protection of surface waters.

Shannonside has asked the timber treatment water-based wood preservative supplier to obtain a different, more environmentally-friendly product with less chemicals, such as propiconazole, to minimise any potential water contamination. This is one of five chemicals in the preservative; the other four are well below environmental limits.

"The company which supplies this preservative are producing a new product this year, which will have less chemicals in it," Mr O'Flaherty explained.

